

TUKWILA: A CITY OF TREES AND A TREE CITY USA



QUIZ!

1. T/F Trees can reduce the needed frequency of repaving parking lots or streets due to the shading they provide.

2. A single mature beech tree can produce enough oxygen for:
 - a. Four people in a year;
 - b. Ten people in a year;
 - c. Thirteen people in a year.

QUIZ!

3. One tree can remove approximately _____ ton of carbon dioxide from the air over its lifetime
- a. $\frac{3}{4}$ ton
 - b. $\frac{3}{8}$ ton
 - c. $\frac{5}{8}$ ton
4. Tukwila's current overall tree canopy is _____%.

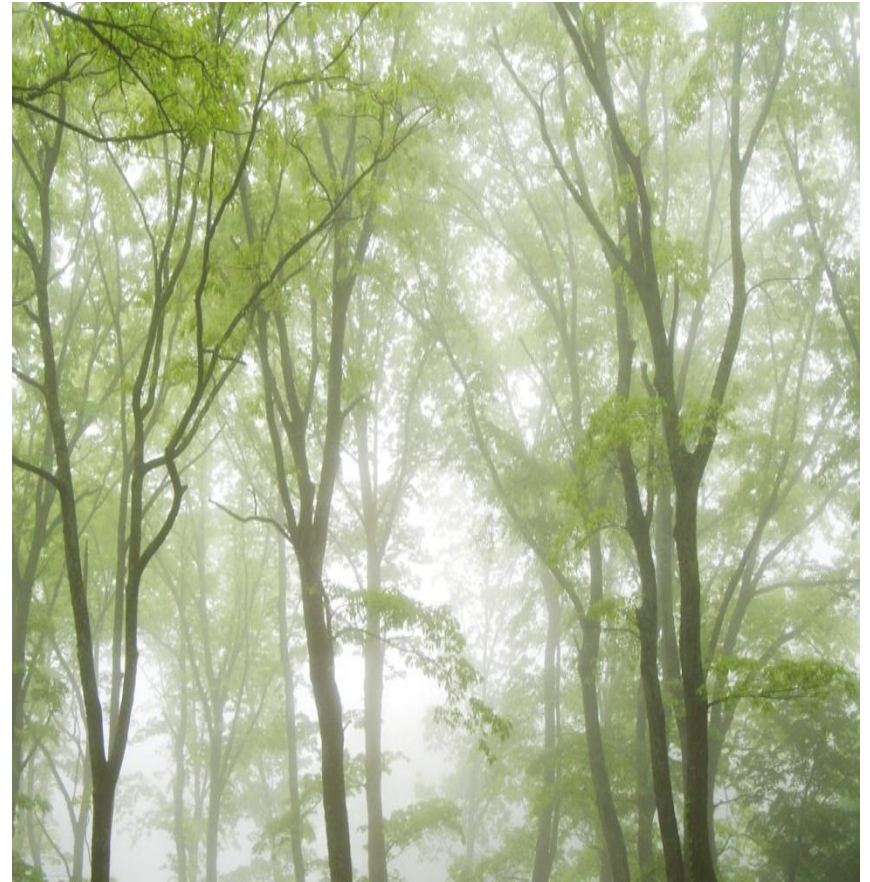
About this presentation

I. Planning Authority in Washington State

II. Committee Context and Role

III. What is our starting point?

- Comprehensive Plan
- Implementing Regulations



About this presentation - continued



IV. Why review policies and programs related to trees?

- Current guidance/issues
- Tree City U.S.A.
- Tree Canopy Assessment
- Why trees are important

V. Next Steps

I. Planning Authority in Washington

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Washington State Constitution

- ✧ The authority to plan in Washington State is derived from the State's Constitution, Article XI, Section 11:
 - “Any county, city, town or township may make and enforce within its limits all such local police, sanitary and other regulations as are not in conflict with general laws.”
- ✧ Courts have long upheld the validity of planning as an exercise of police power

State Authorization for Planning

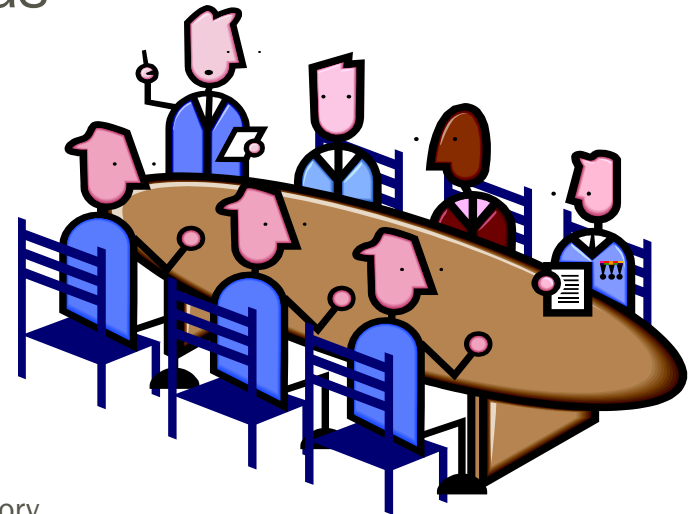
☞ Three state laws provide the primary statutory basis or guidance for planning in Tukwila:

- ❖ Planning Commission Act (RCW 35.63)
- ❖ Optional Municipal Code (RCW 35A.63)
- ❖ Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A)



Planning Commission Act

- ✧ Authorizes the creation of a planning commission
- ✧ Requires land use plan elements to include land use, housing, capital facilities, critical areas and transportation.



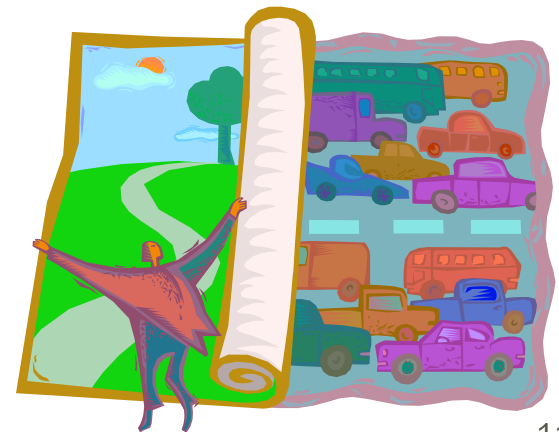
Optional Municipal Code

- ❧ Similar to Planning Commission Act
- ❧ Authorizes appointment of a Planning Commission, planning agency & planning staff.
- ❧ Authorizes preparation of a comprehensive plan with detailed elements.
- ❧ Authorizes preparation of regulations to implement the Comprehensive Plan after plan is adopted.



Growth Management Act

- ☞ Adopted in 1990 by Washington State legislature
- ☞ Goal - prevent uncoordinated and unplanned growth, promote the wise use of land and protection of sensitive areas.
- ☞ Requires regulations be consistent with & implement adopted goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan,



What about Private Property Rights?

- ✎ Courts have ruled that municipalities have the authority to use their police powers to protect the public health, safety and welfare.
- ✎ Goal of local regulations – avoid adopting regulations that constitute a taking of private property without just compensation.

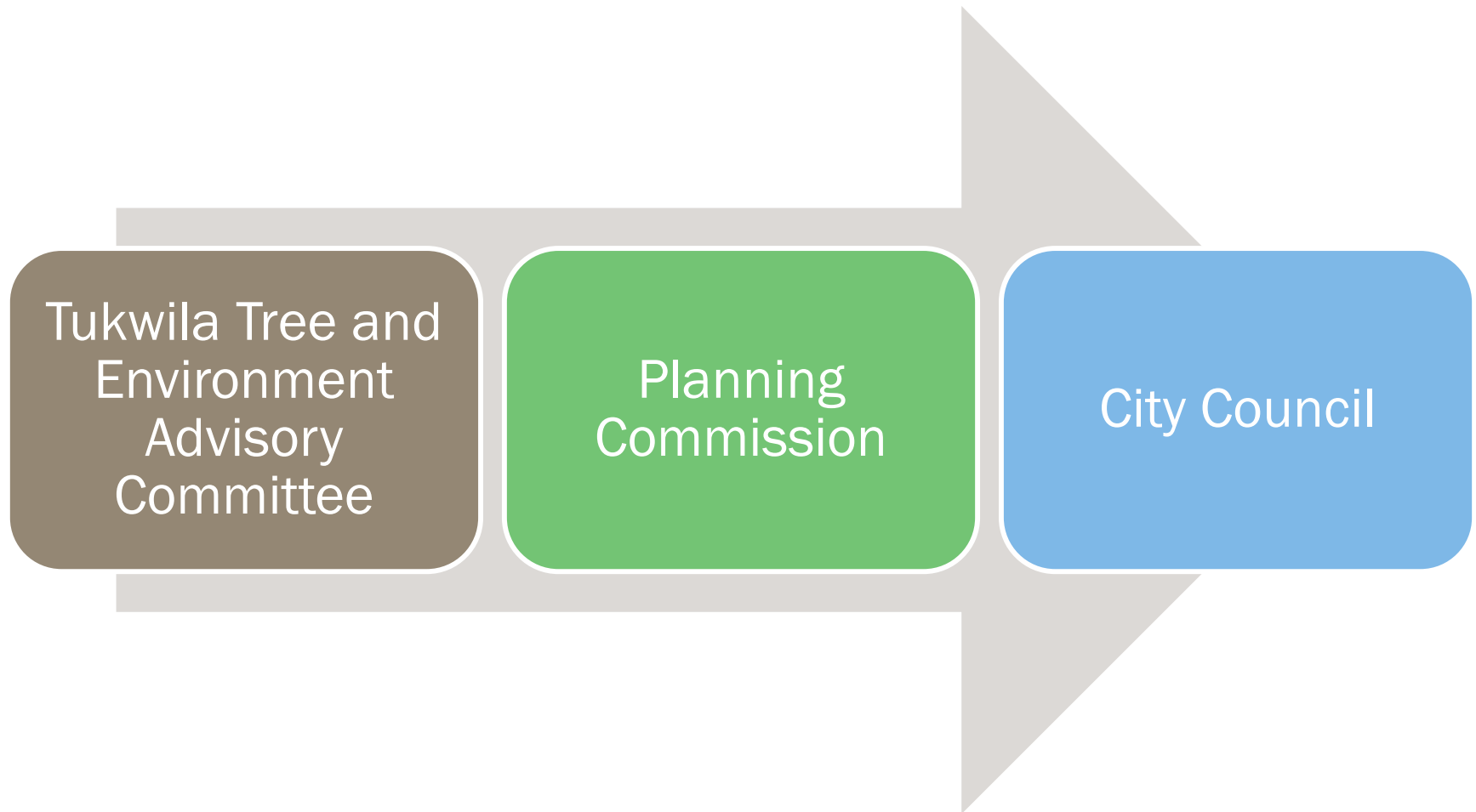
II. Committee Context and Role

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Decision Making Process....



Where does this committee fit in?



Committee Tasks

- ✎ Review Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies (certain chapters) & recommend revisions, addition of new goals/policies related to natural environment and trees
- ✎ Review results of Tree Canopy Assessment, recommend canopy goals for various areas of the city and recommend goals, policies and programs for achieving the goals
- ✎ Provide goal or policy recommendations on landscaping requirements for commercial and industrial areas

Committee Tasks continued

- ✧ Provide goal or policy guidance on current tree clearing and protection ordinances and overall management of trees in Tukwila
- ✧ Provide recommendations for policies and programs to improve street tree management
- ✧ Provide recommendations for policies and programs to improve tree health and canopy on public lands

III. What is our starting point?

∞ 18 ∞



A. Current Key Comprehensive Plan Goals/Policies

Community Image Chapter — Vegetation Related Goals

- ∞ Develop distinctive physical features to identify City boundaries
- ∞ Vegetated hillsides and freeway corridors



Community Image Chapter — Vegetation Related Goals



- ❧ Commercial areas with adequate streetscape landscaping
- ❧ Principal transport corridors with curbs, gutters, sidewalks and tree plantings
- ❧ Incorporate substantial landscaping along street frontages and parking lots in new and re-development

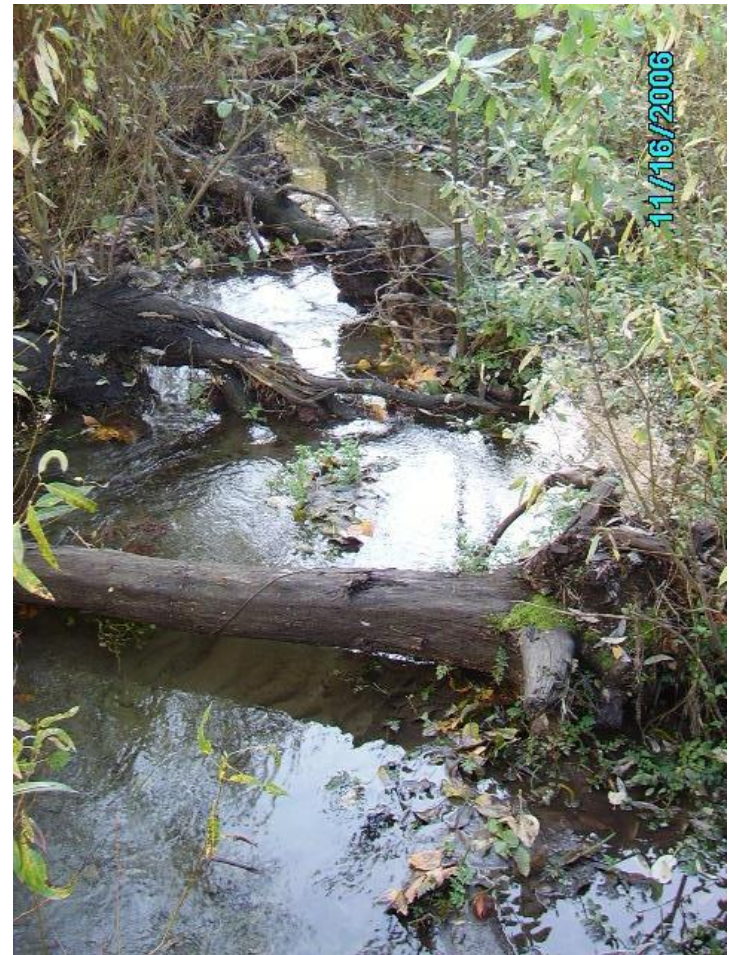
Community Image Chapter — Vegetation Related Goals

- ∞ Develop programs identifying Tukwila's tree resources
- ∞ Establish priorities for tree protection and planting
- ∞ Provide guidelines for tree maintenance, replacement and planting.



Natural Environment Chapter

- ∞ Protect existing vegetation, use supplemental native plantings in wetland and watercourse areas.



Natural Environment Chapter

- ✧ Regulate land use and development, using Best Available Science, to protect natural vegetation and hydrology.
- ✧ Preserve and restore appropriate vegetation plantings in identified fish and wildlife areas.
- ✧ Restore watershed functions by removal of piped watercourses.

Natural Environment Chapter



- ∞ Protect fish and wildlife
- ∞ Reduce potential impacts and liabilities associated with development in areas with geologic instability
- ∞ Educate citizens to understand Tukwila's ecosystem

B. Current Implementing Regulations

- ☞ Shoreline Master Program (TMC 18.44)
- ☞ Sensitive Areas Ordinance (TMC 18.45)
- ☞ Landscape Code (TMC 18.52)
- ☞ Tree Regulations (TMC 18.54)
- ☞ Subdivision Regulations (TMC 19)
- ☞ Right-of-Way Vegetation Regulations ((TMC 11.20)

IV. Why review policies and programs related to trees?

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- ✎ Current Comprehensive Plan goals/policies recognize trees and vegetation play an important role in community identity and sensitive area protection, but no specific guidance on how far regulations should go to protect trees.
- ✎ State Evergreen Communities Act (RCW 76.15) will require local governments to develop urban forestry plans
- ✎ Current tree regulations are unclear

- ✎ Trees continue to be removed or damaged (poor pruning, disease, invasive plants, street trees damaged by cars)
- ✎ Insufficient funding for street tree/public tree maintenance
- ✎ Trees not recognized for value as part of infrastructure

Tree City U.S.A.

- ❧ Tukwila – a Tree City U.S.A. since 2002
- ❧ To be designated a Tree City, jurisdiction must:
 - Have a tree board or department
 - Have a tree care ordinance
 - Have a community forestry program
 - Observe Arbor Day



Tree City U.S.A.

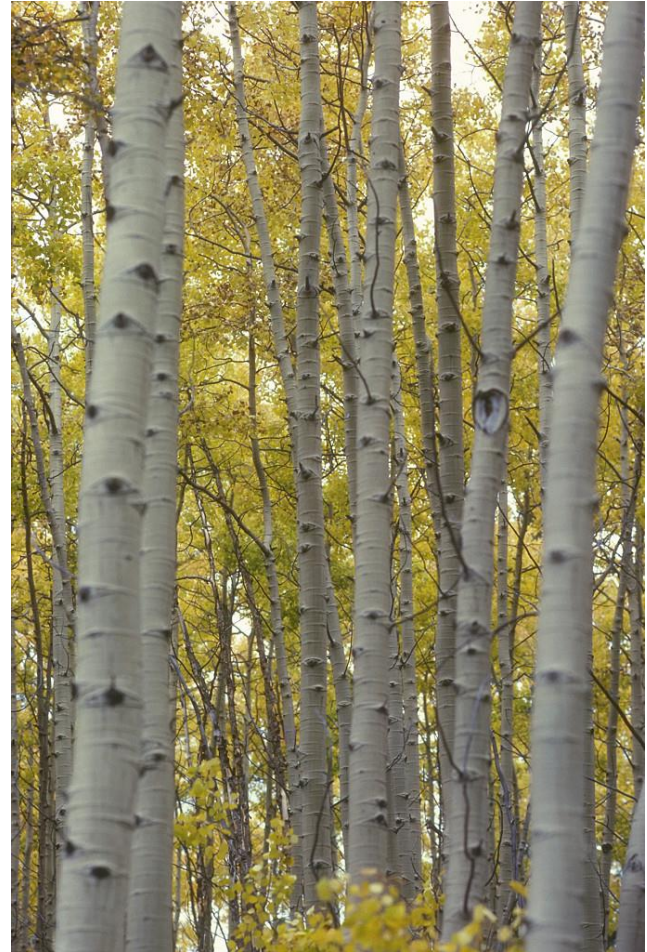
∞ 2011 Tree City U.S.A. efforts in Tukwila:

- Community forestry expenditures = \$82,520
- Per capita spending = \$4.32
- Planted 150 trees
- Removed 15 dead trees
- Pruned/trimmed 250 trees

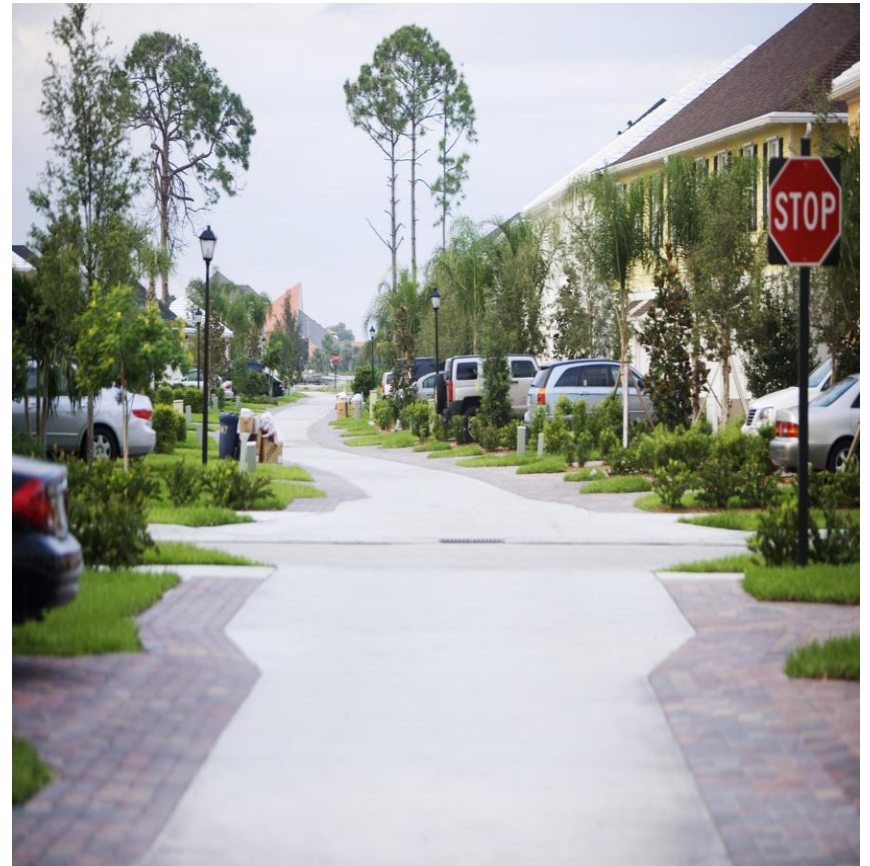
Why are trees important?



Trees provide environmental benefits



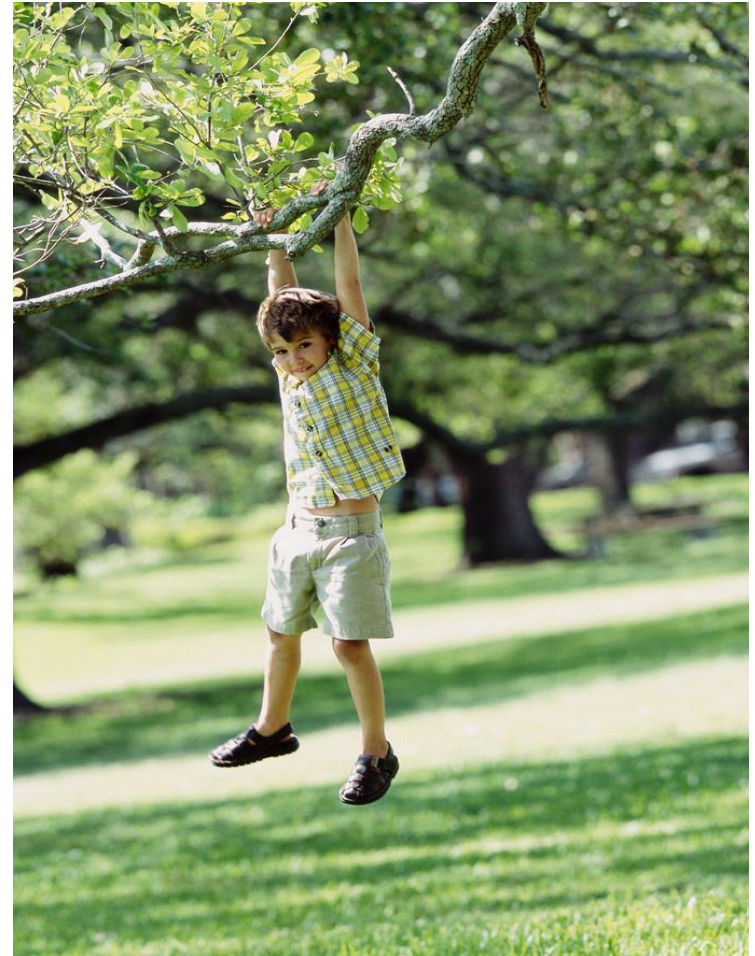
Trees have aesthetic value



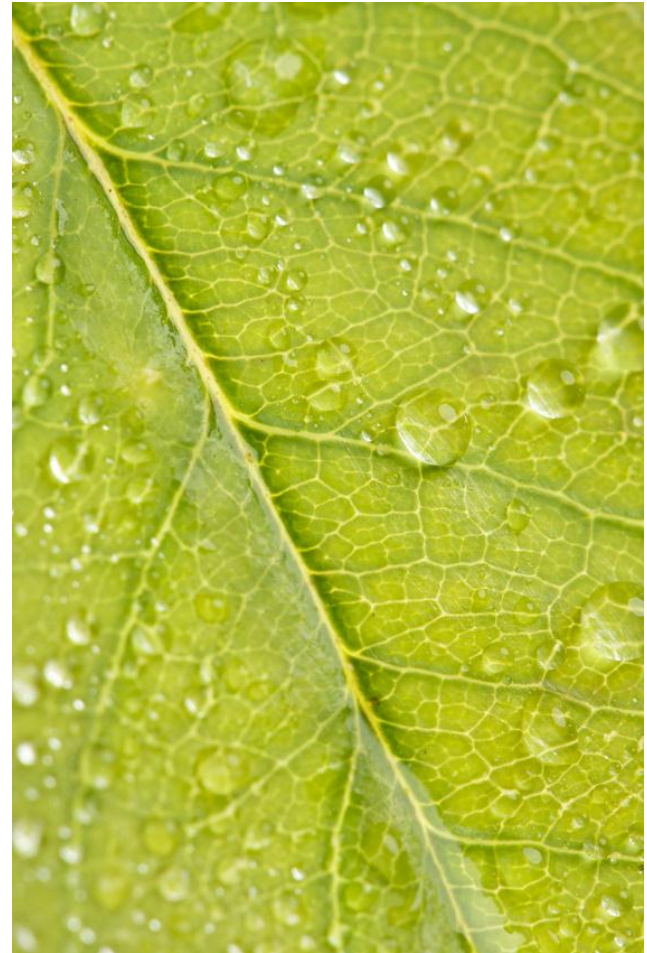
Trees provide wildlife habitat



Trees provide health benefits



Trees have economic value



Tree “Issues”



- ❧ Trees use too much water
- ❧ Trees pollute the air
- ❧ Trees are messy
- ❧ Trees damage sidewalks and foundations
- ❧ Trees are dangerous
- ❧ Trees block views into businesses

V. Next Steps

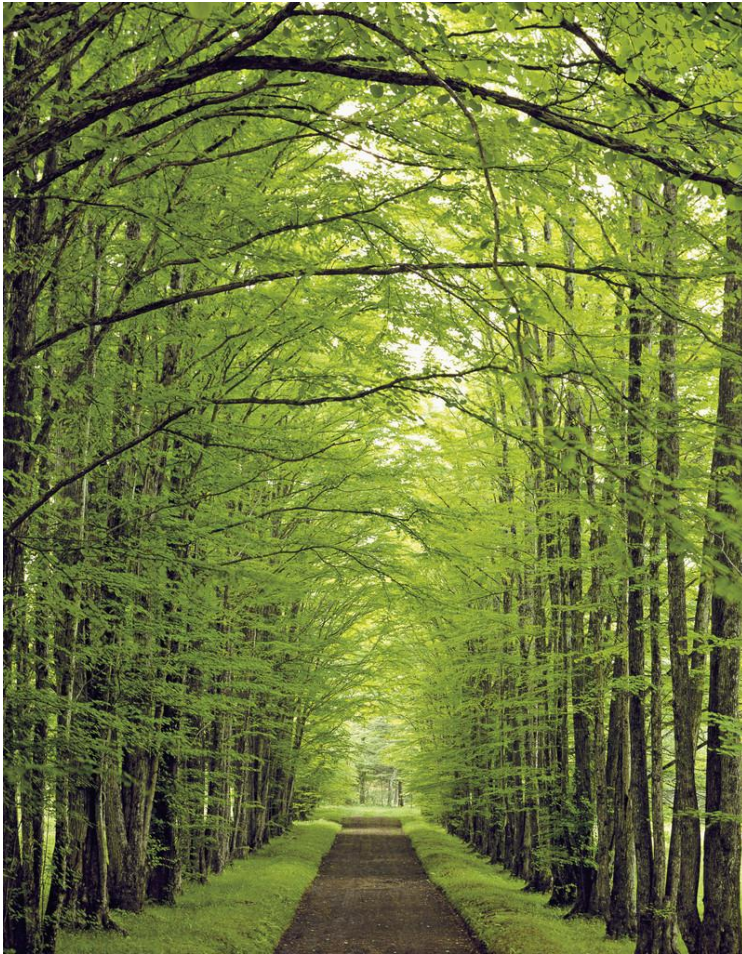
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Tentative Meeting Schedule - handout



Tree Canopy Assessment — under way



- ✧ Consultant will use GIS aerial images to analyze amount of tree cover in Tukwila
- ✧ Advisory Committee will review and recommend goals for canopy coverage in City

Quiz Answers

1. True
2. b., ten
3. a., $\frac{3}{4}$ ton
4. Don't know Yet - Preliminary Results of Tree Canopy Assessment at next meeting

